

BELSIZE BAROQUE



Catherine Martin
Director

**Summer
Baroque**

Schultze
Geminiani
Telemann
Bach

Sunday 5 July
2026, 6.30 pm

St Peter's Church,
Belsize Square,
Belsize Park,
London, NW3 4HY

www.belsizebaroque.org.uk

Summer Baroque

This evening's programme is built around the concerto in its broadest sense: not simply a soloist standing in front of an orchestra, but music based on contrast, conversation and colour. We begin with a real rarity by Johann Christoph Schultze, a Berlin Kapellmeister whose concerto survives in a manuscript with more than one possible scoring, and then go on to hear two very different sides of Telemann: one witty and eccentric, the other elegant and sociable. Geminiani looks back to his teacher Corelli, transforming an intimate violin sonata into something larger and more public, while Bach's A minor Violin Concerto brings the focus onto the violin alone, with Catherine Martin stepping forward as soloist. What links all five works is the sense that this is music designed to keep the ear alert: unusual combinations of instruments, shifting roles between soloists and strings, and a constant play between intimacy and brilliance. As ever, we hope you enjoy hearing some familiar music alongside works you may not have come across before.

Johann Christoph Schultze (1733–1813): Concerto in G major for flute, piccolo, oboe and strings

Andante – Allegro – Adagio – Vivace

Johann Christoph Schultze was born in Berlin in 1733 and later worked in the city as Kapellmeister at the *Döbbelinsches Theater* and then the Royal *Nationaltheater*. He belongs to a slightly later generation than the other composers in tonight's programme, and this comes across in music that often feels lighter, clearer and a little closer to the Classical style than to the denser Baroque language of Bach or Corelli. What makes this concerto especially interesting is the surviving manuscript score, which describes it as a concerto for three flutes but also gives the alternative scoring used in this performance: flute, piccolo and oboe. The piccolo, an instrument rarely used in this context, brightens the top of the texture, while the oboe gives the third line a slightly more pointed and vocal character than a third flute would have done. Schultze also includes a solo bassoon to create a quartet texture in the solo sections. The shifts in colour are most noticeable during the second movement; melodic fragments pass around the three winds, whilst the strings contribute accents and texture throughout, sometimes via pizzicato. The choice of G major gives the strings a resonant tone, which Schultze makes full use of with rustic gestures in the violins on the lowest strings during both fast movements. If, as we believe, this is a modern premiere, it is more than just a curiosity. This is a chance to hear an engaging piece by a composer who has all but disappeared from the repertoire, and in a version that shows off its instrumental colours particularly well.

Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762): Concerto Grosso after Corelli No. 3 in C

Adagio – Allegro – Adagio – Allegro

Francesco Geminiani was born in Lucca, studied with Corelli, and later made his career in London, where he became famous as a violinist, teacher and writer on musical performance. His *concerti grossi* after Corelli's Op. 5 violin sonatas are among his best-known works, and they are much more than simple arrangements. Rather than just orchestrating Corelli's music, Geminiani expands it, turning chamber pieces into concert works with a broader sound and a more public character. This third concerto grows out of Corelli's third sonata, and one of the pleasures of hearing it is that the shape of the original solo writing still remains close to the surface despite the fuller texture. For example, in the second movement, Corelli originally had the solo violin sketching out a conversation with itself by having the violinist play multiple strings at once. From the cues buried

in Corelli's violin part, Geminiani creates a full conversation across a string ensemble. In the final movement, Geminiani preserves the original violin solo part, instead assigning the string group as accompaniment to the soloist in the manner of a solo concerto. You can still hear Corelli's poise and clarity, but Geminiani adds a stronger sense of drama and contrast, enabling this concerto grosso to stand confidently in its own right.

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767): *Grillen-Symphonie*, TWV 50:1

Etwas lebhaft – Tändelnd – Presto

Telemann was one of the most prolific and imaginative composers of the eighteenth century, and few musicians were as good at making seemingly crazy ideas sound completely natural in practice. He spent the final and most important part of his career in Hamburg, and his music regularly mixes French, Italian and German styles with a fluency that was widely admired in his own time. The *Grillen-Symphonie* is one of his most eccentric orchestral pieces. In fact, Telemann crossed out this title on the manuscript, instead defaulting to the rather uninteresting "Concerto in 9 parts". The original title is sometimes translated as "Cricket Symphony", but the meaning of the German word *Grillen* in this context is closer to "whims", "fancies" or "odd notions" than to the insect. Thus, we have a double meaning that describes the listening experience well. The scoring certainly makes the point: piccolo, chalumeau, oboe, strings and two double basses is not an everyday combination, even by Telemann's standards. The chalumeau, an early relative of the clarinet, was mainly used as a special effect to accompany singers. Here, it is very much out of its comfort zone, adding a dark, reedy colour, while the double basses are given an unusually prominent role. The result is music that feels playful, unpredictable and slightly tongue-in-cheek, but never merely gimmicky. Telemann knew exactly what he was doing. The unusual instrumentation is part of the joke, perhaps, but it is also the means by which he creates a very distinctive sound world. It is one of those pieces that reminds you how inventive eighteenth-century orchestral music could be when a composer was in the mood to surprise.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750): *Violin Concerto in A minor*, BWV 1041

(No tempo) – Andante – Allegro assai

We know less than one might expect about the origins of Bach's A minor Violin Concerto. It may date from his years at Köthen, where instrumental music was central to his work, or it may belong to Leipzig, where he directed the Collegium Musicum. Wherever it was written, it is one of the most perfectly judged of all Baroque violin concertos. The opening movement has a firmness and drive that feel unmistakably Bachian, but it also shows how thoroughly he had absorbed the Italian concerto style. The solo violin and orchestra do not simply share the same material in turn; rather, they seem to occupy slightly different musical worlds, giving the movement a strong sense of tension and forward motion. The central Andante is one of Bach's most beautiful slow movements, built over a persistent bass pattern while the solo violin unfolds a long, searching line above it. Then comes the finale, quick and energetic, with something of a dance about it and the sort of contrapuntal strength Bach could bring even to music at full speed. It is a piece that asks for virtuosity, of course, but not in a purely showy sense. More than anything it depends on shape, clarity and rhythmic life — which makes it ideal for a performance directed from the violin, where the soloist remains fully part of the ensemble texture even at the most demanding moments. Listen out for the rising tension of the chromatic violin lines late in the opening movement, intricately ornamented by Bach; the repeating bass pattern in the slow movement, which periodically shifts into the viola parts; and the dense fugal writing of the finale, which eventually thins out into a tense solo line centred on the violin's ringing open E string.

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767): Concerto in B-flat, TWV 54:B1, for 2 flutes, oboe, violin and strings

Largo – Allegro – Dolce – Allegro

This concerto gives us another side of Telemann: less eccentric than the *Grillen-Symphonie*, perhaps, but no less skilful in the way it handles instrumental colour. The solo group here consists of two flutes, oboe and violin, which already gives the piece variety in terms of timbre and character. One of Telemann's particular gifts was his ability to write music in which different instruments really do sound like different personalities. He does not simply give them all the same kind of material and let the listener sort out the rest (yes, looking at you, Vivaldi!). Instead, he allows the flutes, oboe and violin to blend, answer one another, and occasionally pull in different directions. The opening *Largo* is spacious and slightly ceremonial, giving the soloists room to establish themselves before the more energetic writing begins. The faster movements are full of life, but the piece never feels like a battle for attention between four soloists. It is better heard as a well-balanced conversation, in which the pleasure lies in the changing combinations of sound. The *Dolce* slow movement is especially lovely in that respect, with Telemann relaxing the texture and allowing the characters of the solo instruments to come through with great clarity despite being combined (a stately oboe melody overlaid by a florid violin line and punctuated by gentle flutes). Like the Geminiani concerto heard earlier, it is chamber music thinking on a concerto scale, and a good reminder that Telemann could be as refined as he was inventive.

Programme notes by Richard Austen
Design/layout by Andrew Welsh

Putting on performances, running workshops, and maintaining our scholarships all require funds. Concerts alone cannot cover the costs of these and we receive no regular external funding. All of the administration is carried out by unpaid volunteers. We hope that tonight's concert will inspire you to donate to the orchestra, which you can do very easily via the link. Thank you for your generosity. www.justgiving.com/campaign/belsizebaroque



Catherine Martin read music at St Anne's College, Oxford, completing her postgraduate studies with David Takeno at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, on the Advanced Solo Studies course.

During this time, she became interested in historical performance, playing the baroque violin alongside her modern violin studies. Catherine spent twelve years as a member of The English Concert under the direction of Trevor Pinnock, before leaving in 2005 to take up the post of leader of the Gabrieli Consort and Players. In 2010 Catherine was also appointed concertmaster of Die Kölner Akademie in Germany. She has been the leader of the orchestra of the Early Opera Company since its inception in 1994.

Catherine was invited by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in 2012 to coach the players on baroque and classical repertoire. She also runs

weekend workshops and concert performances with many amateur baroque orchestras and modern chamber orchestras who wish to know more about the field of historical performance. Catherine has a particular interest in Norwegian folk music, playing the hardanger fiddle.

In 2003, Catherine joined the Salomon String Quartet as second violin to Simon Standage, with whom she also plays trio sonatas in Collegium Musicum 90. Catherine appears on many recordings; for Deutsche Grammophon and Winged Lion with The Gabrieli Consort and Players, EMI with Ensemble Galant, and Chandos with I Fagiolini. She teaches historical violin at the Royal College of Music in London.



Photo by John Watson



Photo by John Watson

Belsize Baroque

The orchestra comprises music professionals, music students and amateur players. Our amateur musicians come from many different walks of life, and our players in general come from all over the world. Many musicians who joined us as students over the years have gone on to successful careers in top orchestras. Since 2016 the generosity of supporters has in addition made our formal scholarship programme possible.

Over the past two decades, we have been privileged to work with renowned directors and many talented musicians. We have performed many large-scale works with numerous choirs, and have given performances in aid of charities, as well as working with the Handel House and the London Handel Festival. Our first concert at St Peter's was on 22 June 2013, since when we have been orchestra in residence at the church, enjoying the support of its staff and the local community.

Belsize Baroque Orchestral Society Ltd is a registered charity (number 1108596) and company (number 5267265). The orchestra can be hired for orchestral or choral concerts and other events, and is delighted to assist other charities. www.belsizebaroque.org.uk; Twitter: @Belsize_Baroque



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Belsize Baroque would like to thank Richard Link and The Rofeh Trust for their generous donations in support of the orchestra, and the churchwardens of St Peter's for their assistance.

First violins

Catherine Martin
Miranda Ford
Rachel Ambrose Evans
Val Hudson

Second violins

Christine-Marié Louw
Tamsin Ireland
Jenny Frost
Trisha Montague

Violas

Elizabeth Hart
Deborah Miles-Johnson
Roger Mears

Cellos

David Winfield
Mary Walton
Paul Woodmansterne

Bass

Izzy Nisbett
Tess Miles

Harpichord

Michael Strange

Mandora

Quentin Miller

Harp

Jane Bliss

Flutes

Richard Austen
Naomi Anderson

Piccolo

Naomi Anderson

Chalumeau

Richard Austen

Oboe

Susan Cooksley

Bassoon

Hilary Ougham



THE OLD MASTERS IN NEW HANDS

Sheku Kanneh-Mason MBE plays on a cello by Matteo Goffriller, Venice c1700, the 'Ex-Goritzki', made possible by the Florian Leonhard Fellowship, and an exceptionally fine bow by Nicolas Maire c1855, lent by a private sponsor.



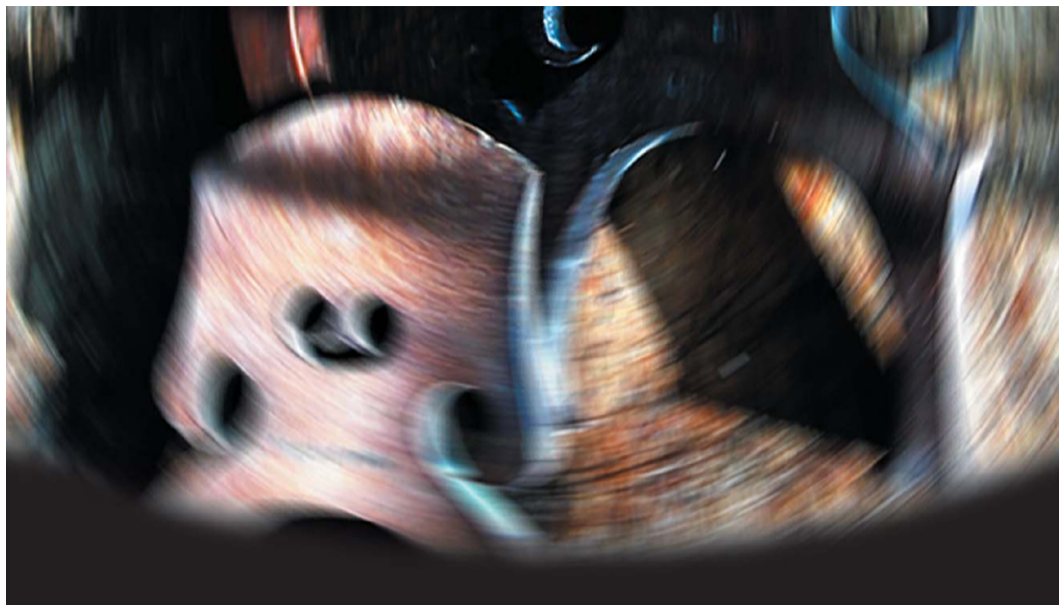
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Save the date! Our next concerts will be on Sunday 13 September and Sunday 15 November at St Peter's, Belsize Park. Details will be available soon at www.belsizebaroque.org.uk.



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